

Anaya, Rudolfo - Alburquerque

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Author: Saenz, Benjamin.

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[REVIEWS continued from page 59]

Points and bases for exile are listed as Political, Religious, Cultural, Personal/Social, Sexual, Legal, and Criminal. A revealing listing by groups—Gay and Lesbian, Holocaust, Yiddish, etc.—is followed by an extensive 700 pages of concise, one-page biocritical sketches, some a bit brief but all well-informed by a host of almost 100 qualified writers. Four useful Appendixes—"Waves of Exile in the Twentieth Century," "Flight and Expulsion: Point of Departure," "Refuge and Haven: Points of Arrival," and "Exile by Category"—a General Bibliography, an Index, and a list of contributors provide a strong network of scholarship.

Besides providing a biographical and critical basis for the literature of exile, the text extends our understanding beyond the few most famous exiles—James Joyce, Ernest Hemingway, Isaac Bashevis Singer, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, etc.—to include such gems as Max Brod, Su Wei, Herbert Marcuse, and Octavio Paz, among others. This reference succeeds in making a living record of a multicultural, multifaceted feature of our modern times and provides the means for future study and assimilation of a central aspect of our world and culture. Highly recommended for all general and research libraries.

—Larry Smith,
Firelands College,
Bowling Green State University

FICTION

01-4-0212

ANAYA, RUDOLFO. *Albuquerque*. Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1992. 280 pp.

ISBN 0-8263-1359-0, \$19.95 cl.
LC 91-43597 ■ PS351.N27A79 ■
CIP

Albuquerque is not so much about a city as it is about the political and spiritual exploration of Chicano identity in the 1990s. The main character, Abrán, a *barrio* boxer in search of his father's identity, is a serious-minded (if scarred) *coyote* (half-breed) looking for a quiet way to heal himself and his people. Along the way, he discovers the underbelly of a city's politics that are emblematic of the history of New Mexico.

Anaya's insights into the social and political problems that plague New Mexico is sometimes funny and sometimes full of irony, but they always display the fierce sense of belonging that the author feels toward his homeland and his people—a place outsiders have pillaged and marketed for centuries—culminating in the chic "Santa Fe" of the nineties—a place only wealthy outsiders can afford. The novel's heart centers around a way of life that is fast being placed on the "endangered species list"—a way of life that includes folk myths, a spirituality that is a mixture of Indigenous and Spanish customs, and a rural lifestyle. The great nostalgia and longing in the novel represent a struggle against loss, a struggle against the many business interests that threaten to destroy the landscape of a magical place.

Describing the spiritual journey—the road to Chimayo—Anaya writes: "...remember to pack first aid for the bruises and cuts. Watch out for the drunk drivers, too, they would laugh, they're dangerous. More than one penitent has been struck and killed on the road to Chimayo. And watch out for tourists, they stop you to take pictures, and the TV news is always there, blocking the road, interviewing people. Be kind, be friendly, they don't know

what this is all about. Pobrecitos, they think it's a show, they don't know what it means to us." This telling passage is the reason why this novel was written: to put into words the story of the *Hispanos* of northern New Mexico. Recommended for academic and public library collections.

—Benjamin Alire Sáenz,
Stanford, CA

01-4-0213

ANDREWS, RAYMOND. *Jessie and Jesus and Cousin Claire*. Atlanta, GA: Peachtree Publishers, 1991. 203 pp. illus. by Benny Andrews. ISBN 1-56145-032-4, \$16.95 cl. LC 91-16676 ■ PS3551.N452J4 ■ 813'.54—dc20 ■ CIP

Eight years separate *Jessie and Jesus and Cousin Claire* from the last installment in the award-winning Muskogean County trilogy. In that time, Andrews has developed a reputation as a master chronicler of early twentieth-century life among Georgia's rural Blacks. This new work, two handsomely illustrated novellas published under one cover, posthumously earned Andrews a 1992 American Book Award.

Typical of the author's style, the narration scoots back and forth in history, though these stories are set in contemporary times. In the first of the mythopoeic novellas, *Jessie and Jesus*, Jessie Mitchell, a determined African-American woman, uses sexual power and trickery to get most of what she wants in the male-controlled South. But the consequences of her deeds haunt Jessie in the person of a mulatto woman named Jesus who, like a ghost in an urban legend, appears and disappears along the roadside. The namesake of *Cousin Claire*, the second novella, is likewise sexually manipulative,